

# SC SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE



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## FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

A time of exciting developments in the village. The huge success of MECE in attaining a GOOD inspection rating which finally changes the special measures designation. It has been a well-deserved accolade after many years of hard work by the Head, all of his staff and the pupils.

After many delays and challenges to do with the weather, staffing and resources Memorial Park is due to open on Friday 22 July. It will be a 'soft' opening as there are still details to be set up which include, completion of the play area, paid access to the polymeric part of the Multi Use Games Area and lighting on the trackway and MUGA. I am so pleased it will be available for the school holidays.

The magazine is full of interesting stories, some of which have happened, and the rest are forecast. It feels that we are back to 'normal' in terms of community activity.

The Standard Assessment test results from the Primary school are good and we look forward to similar achievements from MECE. The library has lots of activities and attractions for the next two months and the team of mostly volunteers would love to see you visit.

Happy summer to you all! ●

Diana Pearman Editor

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**SC** SONNING COMMON  
MAGAZINE

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While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in this magazine, the editor and the publisher cannot accept any responsibility for the consequences of errors that occur.

# CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL AT MECE



## Preparation

The next 8 hours were a blur of preparation. We have a tight plan for such days and this quickly kicked into operation with documents gathered, a timetable prepared, all students spoken to, key staff met, middle leaders prepared and data readied for the day that followed. I know that none of us slept well that night and we were all back in school at 6.45am the next morning to get ready for the day to come.

**Since I was appointed as Headteacher in January 2020 the pressure of OFSTED and moving Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge onwards from its 2017 inspection has been a tangible pressure. More importantly, it was also the pressure of delivering the school that the families of Sonning Common and South Oxfordshire deserve that has been such a motivating force in our work over the last 30 months. Therefore, to receive a very strong 'Good' grading from OFSTED on their recent inspection visit gives us all a mixture of pride, relief and excitement.**

## Notification

I was actually driving my car to a meeting at another school when I was informed OFSTED wanted to speak to me and after a rapid turnaround, I hastened back to MECE to speak to the Lead Inspector by telephone. This call lasts around 90 minutes, and you are grilled about the school and your main foci, progress and development points. The Inspector had done his homework, questioning me about documents, press releases, policy dates and other details regarding the school. However, the call went well and we felt reassured that the inspector was human and understood the school, its context and its journey.

## Day 1

The inspectors met the staff at 8.20am before meeting several middle leaders, visiting lessons and looking at student work. There were also meetings about attendance, SEND, behaviour, exclusions, Pupil Premium, safeguarding, student panels and many more. At 4.30pm myself and Emma Bliss (Deputy Headteacher) were called back into the inspection team base to hear their meeting, where the inspectors feedback on the day to each other, occasionally asking us for clarification. This meeting also sets the agenda for Day 2 and we left with another timetable to prepare and papers to ready. However, we also left brimming with confidence as the inspectors had literally gushed with praise for the school, the staff and the students.

## Day 2

On Day 2 the inspectors visited more lessons from across the timetable, discussed curriculum, higher ability provision, visited an assembly and tutor time along with our reading programme. The inspectors also toured the school during breaktime and in lessons and purposely met as many students as possible to cross reference and test what we had told them.



MAIDEN ERLEGH  
CHILTERN EDGE

What shone through in the inspection was the positive feedback the inspectors received from the students, the staff and the parents which all supported our work on the school. Indeed, the 50 written responses and submissions in support of the school including from Sonning Common Parish Council was quite something. The staff survey was also remarked upon with almost all of our staff (teaching and non-teaching) completing it and 100% saying they felt proud to work in the school. In addition, the inspector was also very positive about our parent view survey with 100% of responses saying they would recommend the school.

## What a team!

In many ways, the word 'team' best summarises and encapsulates all that went on in the school during the inspection. The office staff ensured all ran smoothly, the catering team fed us before and after each day, the support staff quietly ensuring everything was running smoothly and the teaching staff making sure the lessons were everything they should be. I'd also like to pay tribute to the Trust teams who supported the school quietly behind the scenes making sure all bases were covered and additionally, my Senior Leadership Team of Emma Bliss and Judy Hills who were simply remarkable in their professionalism and rigour and definitely left an impression on the inspection team. Whilst it was the very best version of MECE on show for the two days what was pleasing was the work in the books and the students' verbal responses all confirmed that the quality of education the inspection team saw was typical of the experience the students get each day.

## Post inspection

After the inspection you have to wait a good while (14 working days!) before you receive the draft report. You are then given five days to comment on the draft report before the final report comes out. The report is available on the OFSTED website but I have picked out some of the key things we are most pleased about.

Firstly, the comments on the quality of education are so positive. When I arrived as head, I had parents and students telling me the work wasn't challenging enough or interesting enough, however as you can see from the quotes this has been transformed. I am also so pleased for my staff that their work in the classroom has been recognised.

*The curriculum is well organised and logically ordered. It builds systematically on the content of the primary phase. Links with the post-16 curriculum are developmental so the transition into college is seamless. Curriculum content matches, and often exceeds, the national curriculum. The curriculum intent is ambitious and challenging.*

*The school's reading programme is successful in raising aspirations and encouraging a love of reading.*

*Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to enthuse pupils and deepen their knowledge. Professional development ensures that teachers have a wide repertoire of pedagogical approaches. This training ensures that lessons are engaging and valued.*

I was also told by many stakeholders when I arrived in January 2020 that the behaviour in the school needed to be worked upon, so the comments below are a great endorsement of all our hard work.

*Pupils are responsible and respectful. Behaviour and attitudes are positive. Routines and expectations are clear. As a result, there is a calm and purposeful learning environment across the school.*

It has been a pleasure to work with the Sonning Common community and all stakeholders to garner their support in the last two and a half years and this comes through in the comments below.

*Parents are overwhelmingly complimentary about the school.*

*A typical response from one parent said, 'The staff at the school are incredible. They know the pupils well and engage with them on an individual level. I would recommend this school to everyone who asks me'.*

*'The school is increasingly valued across the community. Correspondence from the local parish council commends the school's community involvement. It says that the school is 'very much part of the village community.'*

There are many other incredibly positive comments within the report although the format and the prescribed length of 450

words does not convey the wonderful 90-minute feedback session that the inspectors held with us at the end of the inspection. We are so proud of this report and the progress it confirms on our journey to 'Outstanding'. At last, the school can now hold its head high and be proud of what it is and what it stands for - a school that promotes opportunity for all, that is inclusive and diverse and ensures that its students succeed in a myriad of ways. ●

ANDY HARTLEY  
Headteacher

This is what Ofsted said about us:

- "The curriculum intent is **ambitious and challenging**."
- "Pupils are well **prepared** for their future career opportunities."
- "There is a **calm and purposeful** learning environment across the school."
- "Parents are **overwhelmingly complimentary** about the school."
- "Teachers use their **strong subject knowledge** to enthuse pupils and deepen their knowledge."
- "A culture of **safeguarding** pervades the school. The welfare, well-being and safety of all pupils is a high priority."

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# PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

by Christine Atkinson

## Jubilee

The school celebrated the Queen's Platinum Jubilee on the first day back from half term holidays. Unfortunately the weather was not 'flaming June' and the picnic lunch was held in the hall instead of on the field. But the children still had a good time all dressed in red, white and blue.



## Summer Fair

A huge thank you from the PTA to everyone who came to the Summer Fair. It was lovely to see so many people enjoying themselves, even though the weather was not behaving very well! A special thanks to all the volunteers and staff who helped to make the event such a success. They raised

a fantastic £3000.

And an extra special mention to Miss Wood & Miss Keski who volunteered to be sponged.

## SATs Success at SCPS

Staff at Sonning Common Primary School are delighted with their Year Six students' exam efforts this year, with results that are well ahead of local and national averages in all areas. These are the first officially-tested results since 2019, following two years of pandemic. At SCPS we have a real commitment to delivery, we feel we prepare children well, execute the process carefully, and the children emerge proud of their efforts. We are certainly very proud of them.' ●

## Sport

We all know that exercise is good for the mind as well as the body. The mental strength to keep going in sport is also good for confidence and can make a big difference to children as well as adults. On a sunny day at the beginning of July the Year 3/4 and Year 5/6 Quad Kids teams travelled to Radley College to compete in

the Oxfordshire County Finals.

Quad Kids involves a team of 10 children all taking part in the same four events - running, jumping, throwing and sprinting with points awarded for distance and time. Children from all over Oxfordshire compete locally, and then in the regions - South Oxfordshire, Vale of the White Horse, Cherwell, Oxford City and West Oxfordshire. The winners and second place teams then go on to the County School Games, held this year at Radley College.

SCPS are proud to say that, after many years of trying to achieve a podium place, they finally accomplished this. Not once, but twice! The Y3/4 team finished in 2nd place and the Year 5/6 team are the County Champions. ●



# BEAUTIFUL MUSIC IN SONNING COMMON

by Geoff Adams

What an uplifting performance Chiltern Edge Orchestra gave on 17 May. As is usual with their concerts they played two pieces. The first by Robert Schumann was the Manfred Overture in E-flat major, Op.115 and the second was Symphony No. 6 in D Major, Op. 60 by Antonin Dvorak. Both pieces were performed sympathetically and with real skill by the orchestra and were warmly applauded by

the audience. It really is encouraging that we have so much talent in our midst and I defy anybody not to be moved by the performance.

The orchestra rehearses in term time from September to May at Sonning Common Primary School and gives one concert in December and another in May. There is a professional conductor who is very enthusiastic and is able to get the performance to a really high standard. He is supported by the professional leader. All

other members are amateurs who join without audition for the sheer pleasure of playing together. Currently the orchestra is looking for horn and brass players. Strings are also welcome.

Autumn term starts on 13 September when the orchestra will be playing Sibelius Symphony No. 3 and another piece to be confirmed.

For more information look on their website <http://www.chilternedgeorchestra.org.uk/> or phone 07714 235849 ●



# VILLAGE GARDENERS

## A SYMBOL TO HONOUR THE HEROIC STRUGGLE OF THE UKRAINIAN PEOPLE

On Sunday 5 June, taking a brief respite from Jubilee celebrations, "Sonning Common Village Gardeners" performed their Annual Summer planting.

The session was very well attended, and much was achieved in record time. This included planting a special tiered display of blue and yellow, representing the Ukraine

flag, in front of the Village Hall in recognition of the dreadful crisis.

Plants were kindly donated by Heath and Watkins.

**SonningCommonVillageGardeners.uk** or [scvg.ukenquiries@scvg.uk](mailto:scvg.ukenquiries@scvg.uk)  
0118 972 2141

Paul W



# SHEDQUARTERS

Shedquarters is a fledgling Men's Shed. A registered charity affiliated with the UK Men's Shed Association. Charity number 1198347.

Shedquarters will be situated on land adjacent to Peppard War Memorial Hall and will be open to both men and women who would like the opportunity to make and mend things in a sociable environment. A chance to make new friends, start a project, repair something and to share experience and gain new skills.

We are in the process of applying for planning permission to erect a suitable building and hope to be up and running in the spring of 2023. ●

Sheila Maughan

We have started a collection of suitable tools and would be happy to receive any tool donations. Contact details below.



Images below from L-R; Beacon lighting, FISH Jubilee Tea Party, Village Post Box



# JOIN A WORTHWHILE ACTIVITY

Sonning Common Green Gym is continuing to meet on Thursday and Saturday mornings, and we have been pleased to welcome several new members in recent months. Recent highlights have been helping to clear fallen timber following the storms at Greys Court, first aid training for leaders and other interested volunteers, holly clearance in Spring Wood, along with work on the local Commons. We also installed two benches in memory of Robin Howles, a long standing volunteer who sadly died last year.

In the coming months we will be visiting many of our favourite sites including Aston Rowant Nature Reserve, and Cleeve Water Meadows and also some new ones, South Stoke Churchyard and Streatley Meadow.

Details of our programme are available on our website

<http://sonningcommon.tcv.org.uk> or phone our secretary on 01189724228.

We would be very pleased to see you!

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Phil Sweetman

# Parish news

The content of this page is the sole responsibility of, and is paid for by, Sonning Common Parish Council

## INSPIRED VILLAGES SONNING COMMON DEVELOPMENT

Sonning Common Parish Council (PC) first recommended refusal of this proposal in 2019 due to it being contrary to the village's neighbourhood development plan and its enormous impact on the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty that surrounds the village.

Inspired Villages (IV) was eventually granted planning permission on appeal for 133 "assisted living" flats in the Little Sparrows field off Blounts Court Road. That appeal was put up for Judicial Review by the High Court but was not granted despite the

appeal Inspector having effectively trashed AONBs across the country by declaring this one not worthy of protection.

In February members of the PC met Simon James, a rep from IV to hear our concerns. Further communication by them was promised and not delivered..At the PC meeting on 20 June, five IV representatives attended.

"It's devastating that none of the concerns or issues raised before were listened to and acknowledged in the presentation IV representatives gave at this meeting about the construction traffic management plan" said Vice Chair Cllr Vicky Boorman.

Cllr Cann highlighted they had brought in a PR team to the meeting, but between them they couldn't answer our simple questions and quite obviously had not even bothered to visit the site as they



weren't aware of the 'Unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles' sign that Cllr Lewis pointed out is at the entrance of Blounts Court from Peppard Road. That junction is a very sharp turn for any vehicle yet is their route proposed for all their construction vehicles despite it being "unsuitable for HGVs".

The Parish Council Chair John Stoves said: "we are really concerned that Inspired Villages are putting the parishioners of Sonning Common and Rotherfield Peppard at a serious safety risk with their construction plan". The Springwater Church, in Rotherfield Peppard, runs busy nursery groups during the day. Many people walk along this narrow rural road to get to and from public footpaths and woods off Blounts Court road. Also, the main Peppard road is a route for many to and from schools. We will not be safe walking around our village anymore.

### Further concerns

A. Their plans for community engagement saying that they recognise that the development at Little Sparrows remains a sensitive issue for many local residents and want to ensure that what is delivered in Sonning Common is the best that it can possibly be. Later this year they will be undertaking a public consultation in writing.

B. Their proposed Construction Traffic Management Plan, currently in the process of finalising, needs to be agreed with OCC Highways. It will be designed to minimise disruption during the construction phase of the development. It will propose the construction access arrangement and its

routing to mitigate any severe impact on the local roads.

C. Inspired Villages has proposed a new construction entrance meaning the loss of more natural hedgerow and mature trees in addition to all disturbance caused by the HGVs and Inspired Villages' staff driving into work from outside the village during construction and thereafter. This development is still not wanted, definitely not suitable and, from what we have been provided with so far, Inspired Villages do not live up to their name and should have a long hard think about their attitude to local communities

If you wish to register concerns or need more information, please email [isobelballsdon@mpc.email](mailto:isobelballsdon@mpc.email) or visit [www.inspiredvillages.co.uk/village/sonning-common](http://www.inspiredvillages.co.uk/village/sonning-common)

Sonning Common Parish Council calls again for South Oxfordshire District Council, which had refused planning consent, to spend the £7.5million promised by the development if it was successful, on affordable housing in the village. ●



## SPEED REDUCTION MEASURES IN SONNING COMMON

Our original NDP of 2016 called for a reduction in speed limits within the village as and when it could be achieved. The latest 2021 revision maintains and reinforces that ambition as follows:-

Policy RTP4 - Proposals to improve road safety and lower vehicle emissions through lower speed limits in the village speed limits will be supported.

I was pleased to report at the July

meeting that our application for 20 mph has been accepted by Oxfordshire County Council and is being progressed by their Officers ●

Cllr Jonny Bidgood

Liza Foster

Foot Health Professional



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## FISH Tea Party

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Village hall

Monday 12 September  
Monday 10 October  
Monday 14 November  
Monday 12 December  
Many thanks in advance

Mary Norris  
(FISH Office)

## u3a Day Walks

u3a Henley-on-Thames day walks are held on the first Wednesday of each month starting at 10:30. They are generally about 6 miles at a steady pace and usually include a lunch stop for a snack at a pub or a picnic.  
We welcome anyone wanting to get out and about in our beautiful Chilterns countryside. Join us as a guest in the first instance to see how you like us! For further information contact:  
Julia Whitelaw 07795 528 354  
or Gill Hegarty 07552 431 000

## FREDERICK THE FOX

Book reading by author Kim Ansell,  
& colouring activities with illustrator  
Lisa Read

10am Sat 27th August at  
Sonning Common Library



## 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

This will take place on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2022 from 11 am to 3 pm.  
You are invited

The health centre is opening its doors to celebrate 52 years of service to Sonning Common and surrounding areas. Currently we have over 10000 patients registered.

There have been many changes, such as increasing population, building extensions, adapting to different working hours and styles (home visits, evening, weekend hours) delivering babies, minor operations, a global pandemic and, running mass vaccination clinics with the help of many of our patients.

It will be a reunion of past and present employees as well as a community event for our patients to enjoy. We would love to see you there.

Please come and say hello. Many of our former doctors, nurses and secretarial and reception team will be joining us on the day including some from afar.

There will be talks from some familiar faces about ‘what they’re doing now’ or ‘how it used to be’.

Active Leaders will have activities for the young.

There will be a display of the history and successes over the years. Groups such as Green Gym, Health Walks, Health Cycling, Functional Physio/Pilates and Active Leaders will be invited to have stalls to display information on healthy activities. Also FISH and Shedquarters (our own DIY craft and repair shop).

There will be refreshments available during the event.

Please check our website nearer the date with more details on timings of talks or contact us by email at either  
Sue Abbott [sue.abbott@nhs.net](mailto:sue.abbott@nhs.net) or  
Sue Litchfield [sue.HAT1999@gmail.com](mailto:sue.HAT1999@gmail.com)

## Chance2dance4charity

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2022  
7:30pm – 9:30pm

Peppard War Memorial Hall, Gallowtree Road,  
Peppard Common, RG9 5JA

An evening for people who love to dance but are maybe a bit too old for nightclubs and never get the chance to dance!  
All kinds of music from the 60's onwards. With a fun short taster session by local dance teacher, Kayleigh Rixon.

Tickets: £7

Buy in advance here:  
<https://billetto.co.uk/e/chance2dance4charity-tickets-659716>  
and on the door (subject to availability)

More information please email:  
[s.bingham748@btinternet.com](mailto:s.bingham748@btinternet.com)

Bring your own refreshments as no food or drink on sale.  
All proceeds from this inaugural chance2dance4charity event go to Amnesty International.



## SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Let's  
“talk”  
about

## THE MENOPAUSE DR SHILPA MCQUILLAN

MENOPAUSE SPECIALIST

DR SHILPA MCQUILLAN IS A BRITISH MENOPAUSE SOCIETY ACCREDITED MENOPAUSE SPECIALIST, GENERAL PRACTITIONER AND COMMUNITY GYNAECOLOGIST.

DR SHILPA MCQUILLAN IS KINDLY GOING TO SHARE SOME OF HER WISDOM OF KNOWLEDGE ABOUT THE PERIMENOPAUSE AND MENOPAUSE. INFORMATION WILL INCLUDE WHAT SYMPTOMS TO LOOK FOR, WHEN TO SEEK HELP, LIFESTYLE CHANGES YOU CAN MAKE TO HELP YOURSELF, WHAT TREATMENTS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE NHS. THERE WILL ALSO BE A Q&A AT THE END OF THE TALK.

ALSO SUPPORTING AND PRESENT FOR THE EVENT TO ANSWER ANY LOCAL QUERIES WILL BE DR KIM ELLIOTT AND DR JENNIFER NICHOLSON - SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE'S PRACTICE WELL WOMEN EXPERTS

**WEDNESDAY  
14TH SEPT  
2022  
6.00-7.15 PM**

TO BE HELD ONLINE VIA ZOOM



TO BOOK YOUR PLACE AND TO  
RECEIVE A LINK TO THE EVENT  
PLEASE EMAIL [SCHCPPG@gmail.com](mailto:SCHCPPG@gmail.com)

## Nettlebed Art & Craft Show 2022

will be held in Nettlebed Community School Hall  
on Saturday 6 August 12 noon to 6 pm  
and  
Sunday 7 August 10 am to 5 pm

For Entry Forms to show paintings or to have a craft table:  
email: [nettlebedas@gmail.com](mailto:nettlebedas@gmail.com)  
or phone Susan on 01491 641138

All proceeds go to Local Charities  
Free entry and parking. Teas available all day.  
Disabled Access

## SC. SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE



There will be a reading of the Sonning Common Magazine at Sonning Common Library from 10:30 to 11:30 on Friday 10th June  
Tea/coffee will be served

## SONNING COMMON COFFEE MORNING

Sonning Common Village Hall  
WEDNESDAY 7<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER

10.30 a.m. – 12 Noon

All Welcome – Please join us for a Cup of Coffee/Tea and Biscuits



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For information on Local Activities and Classes  
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Hosted by: Sonning Common Women's Institute  
Profits benefit local good causes  
the WI INSPIRING WOMEN

## Health Walks

There are no walk timetables in paper form at the moment, so please check the website for days/starting places/distances:

[www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable](http://www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable)

We are blessed with fantastic countryside in the Chilterns – so what’s your excuse? Get out and walk before the weather gets colder! If you want to speak to someone about any aspect of the Health Walks, phone Chris Brook on 972 2609

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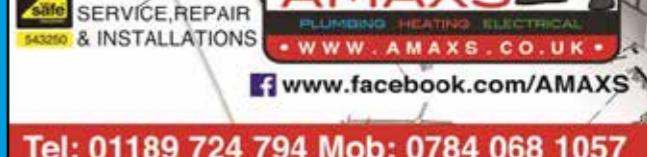
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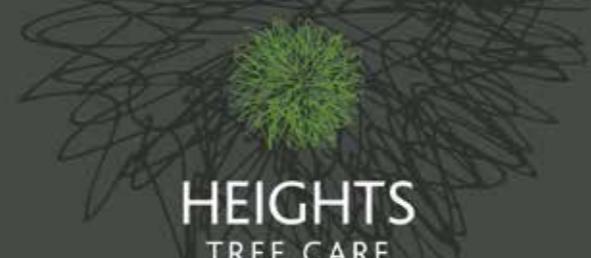
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# SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE



## Staff News

Farewell to Dr Antonio Stavrou and Dr Sonia McGregor whose GP trainee placements at SCHC ended in July. They are wished all the best in the future.

Welcome to three new GP trainees, Dr Bethan Evans, Dr Chandni Haria and Dr Tawa Olanipekun joined in August and will be working at the health centre for either one year or six months. Dr Sana Shaikh who joined in February is continuing with her placement as a GP trainee.

## New teams within our practice

### Care Co-ordinator team

The Care Co-ordinator team's role is to work alongside the GPs and nurses to ensure the best and most up to date care is provided to all our patients. Our team will be working with patients for a variety of different needs. As well as co-ordinating the covid vaccine campaign, they are currently assisting patients with, low or high blood pressure, diabetes, and NHS Health Checks.

### Community Link Workers

Abbie Crook and Rachel Downey are from Age UK Oxfordshire. They work alongside anyone 18+ who may need

help within the community.

They take a holistic and individualised approach to care and provide support within many areas, focusing on issues surrounding mental wellbeing, being more active and more socially connected.

Contact: Phone **0345 4501276** or Email [communitylink.schc@nhs.net](mailto:communitylink.schc@nhs.net)

For more information on what is new at SCHC visit our website and download our summer newsletter: [www.sonningcommonhealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.sonningcommonhealthcentre.co.uk)

**Sue Litchfield for SCHC**



## Covid Vaccination update

The Covid Spring Booster Vaccination programme is now completed. Between April and June 840 patients from the high risk priority groups were

vaccinated: Care Home Residents, aged 75 years and over (including home visits to any of our patients who are housebound), and patients with a lowered immune system. This takes the grand total number of Covid vaccines given by SCHC to 16,681!

The Covid vaccination programme is now paused until the autumn but eligible patients can still obtain a COVID vaccination via the National Booking Service or via one of the local walk-in sites. Please check national news and our websites for updates on the criteria for the Autumn Booster Programme once plans have been confirmed.

Our Flu Programme is now in the planning stage and to start Flu Clinics at the Health Centre during September depending on vaccine delivery dates. SCHC will be contacting patients directly and will update our website once these details have been finalised.

During Covid it was necessary to react when things went wrong. However, the focus now will be on prevention of disease, and promoting health and wellbeing. Although the NHS is facing numerous challenges and changes, there are several new services that have already been introduced for our community, and hope to introduce several more over the next year. Please see our practice newsletter on the website for more details.

Sonning Common Health Centre patients have received a total 22,622 doses of a COVID Vaccination either directly from the Practice or at a Mass Vaccination Site:

**1st Vaccination = 7373 - 92% of our Adult population**

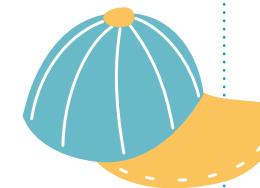
**2nd Vaccination = 7283 - 91% of our Adult population**

**Autumn Booster = 6675 - 83% of our Adult population**

**Spring Booster = 1202 - 89% of our eligible population**



# SUN SAFETY



be shown by the letters 'UVA' in a circle. This means that it meets the EU standard.

### Sun safety for children

Sun safety is important at all ages. Protect children's skin using a combination of shade, clothing and sunscreen.

Covering skin, perhaps wearing a t-shirt in the paddling pool or a hat when at the park. Sunscreen. Apply it regularly and use a sunscreen with a minimum SPF 15 and a 4 or 5 star rating.

### How does the sun and UV cause cancer?

Too much ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can damage DNA in your skin cells and cause skin cancer.



In the UK almost 9 in 10 cases of melanoma, the most serious type of skin cancer, could be prevented by staying safe in the sun and avoiding sunbeds.

Getting sunburnt just once every two years can triple your risk of melanoma skin cancer, compared to never being burnt.

### What is UV?

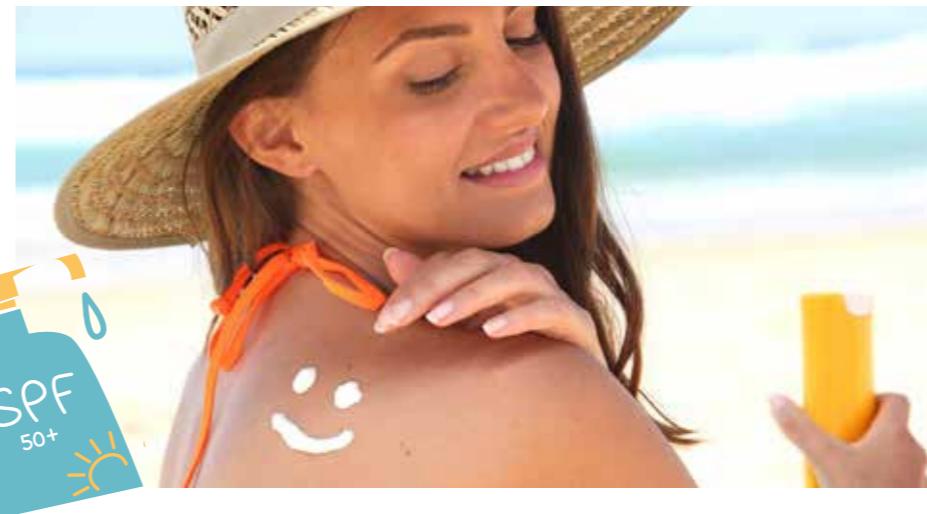
Ultraviolet radiation (UV) is a source of energy that is released naturally by the sun and artificially from sunbeds.

There are two main types of UV rays that damage our skin. Both types can cause skin cancer:

**UVB** is responsible for most sunburns.

**UVA** penetrates deep into the skin. It ages the skin but contributes much less towards sunburn. ●

**Sue Litchfield for SCHC**



**The best way to enjoy the sun safely and protect your skin is to use shade, clothing and sunscreen.**

**Shade and clothing are better than sunscreen at protecting your skin.**

**Using a sunscreen with at least SPF15 and 4 or 5 stars. Use it generously, reapply often**



In the UK, the sun's ultraviolet (UV) rays are the strongest between 11am and 3pm from mid-March to mid-October. During this time, the sun may be strong enough to cause damage. Take extra care to protect your skin, especially if you get sunburnt easily by:

### Shade

Spending time in the shade is one of the best ways to protect your skin from the sun's UV rays.

### Create shade

Take a break under trees, umbrellas, canopies or go indoors. Not only will it help protect you from the harmful UV rays, if it's hot, you'll get a break from the heat, too.

### The weather

Even on cloudy or foggy days you can still get sunburned. Up to 80% of UV rays pass through cloud or mist, so be sure to still find



shade, cover up and use sunscreen on the areas you cannot cover.

### Covering up

#### Hats

Choose a wide-brimmed hat that shades your face, ears and neck for the most UV protection.

#### Sunglasses

Sunglasses can protect your eyes from UV rays. When choosing sunglasses look for one of the following:

'CE Mark' and British Standard

UV 400 label and 100% UV protection written on the label or sticker

Protection at the side of the eye, for example, wraparound styles, sports glasses or bigger sunglasses

#### Sunscreen

Sunscreen doesn't protect us completely from sun damage on its own. However, it can be useful for taking care of the parts of skin we can't shade or cover.

Buying sunscreens with a:

Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of at least 15 (UVB protection)

High star rating with 4 or 5 stars (UVA protection)

UVA protection can also

**SUN  
Safety**

# COMMEMORATING QUEEN ELIZABETH'S 70 YEAR REIGN

Fabulous Jubilee street parties were held across Sonning Common. Here are photos of a few of them!



# FUN AND GAMES

The summer term at Sonning Common Beavers has been a busy one! We have had some exciting sessions with parents coming to help us build veg boxes in our garden to a bespoke lego session with The Creative Brick Company. The Beavers have learnt new skills, such as building; lighting and cooking on outdoor fires, developing map reading skills and making trails for each other in the woods and flower pressing to make impressive bookmarks. We have enjoyed visits from the local police force and of course testing out the back of the police van!

At the beginning of the term the beavers created and starred in a play retelling the story of St George as part of the St Georges Day parade at St John's church, Kidmore End. They kept the congregation entertained with an exciting battle between George and

the 3 person long dragon which they built and decorated themselves ahead of the performance. It was a wonderful opportunity to showcase the children's confidence and skill in performing to an audience, and we are all very excited for next year's follow up performance.

In May we ventured out on our first overnight stay away at Youlbury Scout camp. The Beavers had the opportunity to brave the zip wire, as well as crate stacking, fire building, outdoor cooking, team games and go-karting as well as learning some fun campfire songs and sleeping away from home for the first time. They were a credit to their uniform and made us feel extremely proud of their behaviour, attitude and kindness towards each other.

Plans are already being made for September and the beavers can look forward to a yoga session, stargazing and visits from the fire brigade to

help them learn some first aid skills. Whilst we continue planning the next adventure I would like to take the opportunity to thank everybody who has supported us through our first year as a new group. We have learnt a lot and really enjoyed working with the children and community to enjoy Tuesday evenings together. We are very much looking forward to the Autumn term and the adventures that it will bring. ●

**With thanks,  
Raya and Sisu**

**If you would like to add your child  
to the waiting list please email  
[socobeavers@hotmail.com](mailto:socobeavers@hotmail.com)**



# ROTHFIELD UNITED PRESENTATION DAY

By CHRISTINE ATKINSON

The whole club got together on Sunday 24th June for the annual Presentation Day. Each team had their own presentation and then the club awards were presented. There was also a lot of fun with the youth teams playing matches against each other, and a bar and BBQ! There was also a stall run by 'Sport in Mind' - a local Reading based charity working in partnership with the NHS which aims "To improve the lives of people experiencing mental health problems through sport and physical activity". This includes sport as well as general movement, gardening, dance etc.



**Clubman of the year** - Alan Noble who has taken on dual roles in the club committee as Membership Secretary and Treasurer and is doing a great job. "richly deserved!"

**Junior Clubman of the year** - Will Grant.

**Manager of the season** - Nick Jones from the Under 7s

**Organiser** - Matt Beech

**The Christopher Cup** was presented to Rory Forbes. The Christopher Cup is awarded to an Under 9 player who plays football in the right spirit and for the love

of the game. This cup was presented to the club by Fred and Margaret Kendrick (Fred was the chairman of Rotherfield for many years) to commemorate their son Christopher, who died of leukaemia at a young age and loved his football.

The walking football team and the recently joined ladies team also participated on the day. Louise from the Ladies team said "the beginners and first team had a great time! The whole event was really well done".

Ian from walking football said "we really enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and our game against the ladies team was

great fun!"

"Matt Beech and Andy Tidswell did a great job of organising the running of the day"

"thanks for the organising behind the scenes"

"well done everyone. What a fantastic club we're part of"

"the schedule never went off all day. Great day everyone"

Next year is the 50th anniversary of the club and there will hopefully be many celebrations! ●

## A TRIBUTE TO ANNABEL IRWIN

from her very good friend, Joan Lamprell

Annabel was known to many in the village, from her veterinary work, through the NWR group, book clubs and latterly as library assistant. "One of my best" says Rosemary Dunstan at Sonning Common Library.

Annabel died on 17th May, following a battle with cancer. It was a peaceful end in hospital with her husband and children.

She was born in Norwich and her family moved down to Woodcote very soon afterwards, to a house with a large garden, chickens, geese and Topsy the donkey. She did well at school, attending Henley Grammar where she qualified to train as a vet at the Royal Veterinary College.

Dave met Annabel during her last years at school and they married in 1973. She

worked as a vet in Wallingford and then in Sonning Common. In 1975 they bought a building plot in Wood Lane and built their family home. Their daughter Anna was born in 1984 and Sally in 1985. Annabel stopped work as a vet to concentrate on her family and over the years developed a great group of friends. She loved gardening, reading and walking and she was always an honest, hardworking, friendly person who loved helping others.

Annabel and Dave also delighted in travel and over the years they visited many countries throughout the world their last trip being to South America and Antarctica.

Annabel has been my friend for over 20 years and last year took a sponsored walk with me to Dorchester to raise funds for

Christ the King church, a walk done in record time, so that Annabel could get a cream tea at the end.

Annabel was straightforward, always had a smile and will be greatly missed by all who knew her.

In the last few days there has been further sad news as Joan has died very suddenly.



# ADULT LIBRARY BOOKS HOW MUCH MONEY COULD YOU SAVE?

**Let's not be coy, the library is most well-known for its books. There are loads of other reasons you might go there: to take a photocopy of a document, or to print something out; to join in with an activity such as a craft event or an author evening; to borrow a jigsaw puzzle; to see a human face and have a chat; or for numerous other things. However, the truth of the matter is, the library is full of books.**

I know some people don't see themselves as library users and some don't even see themselves as readers, BUT there really is a book out there for everyone. I'm a firm believer that people should read what they enjoy. I am sure many were put off by what they were forced to study at school. Newsflash - not all books are that stodgy!! Not all are jammed full of flouncy words. Yes, some are and if that's your thing, then there are some of those in the library for you. If you'd rather read about time travel, shoot-outs in the Wild West, or soppy romance, that's fine too. If a book takes you away from your day-to-day life, then it's a good book. How many times have you bought a book and not enjoyed it

though? It's very annoying, and if it happens repeatedly, quite costly. As we are all being forced to think twice about our spending these days, sourcing your reading material from the library rather than buying it really is a no-brainer. Even considering the huge discounts offered by some supermarkets and online sites, a paperback can easily cost you £5. If you read a book a fortnight that is a total of £130 a year. It all adds up!! Even in the unlikely event that every book you wanted to read was not held at your local library, and you had to pay to order every single one of them in, you would still save nearly £100. By the way, if you're thinking reserving a book would mean two trips to the library, you would be wrong. You can order a book online and just pop in to collect it once you've received the email to tell you it's there. Of course, you can visit the library to request a specific book if you prefer, who knows, you might even come across another one to read in the meantime! If you are interested in anything, anything at all, then there is a book for you. There are non-fiction sections on Local Studies, Fishing, History, Mindfulness, Biographies, Cooking, Nature and many other topics.

Alison Smith

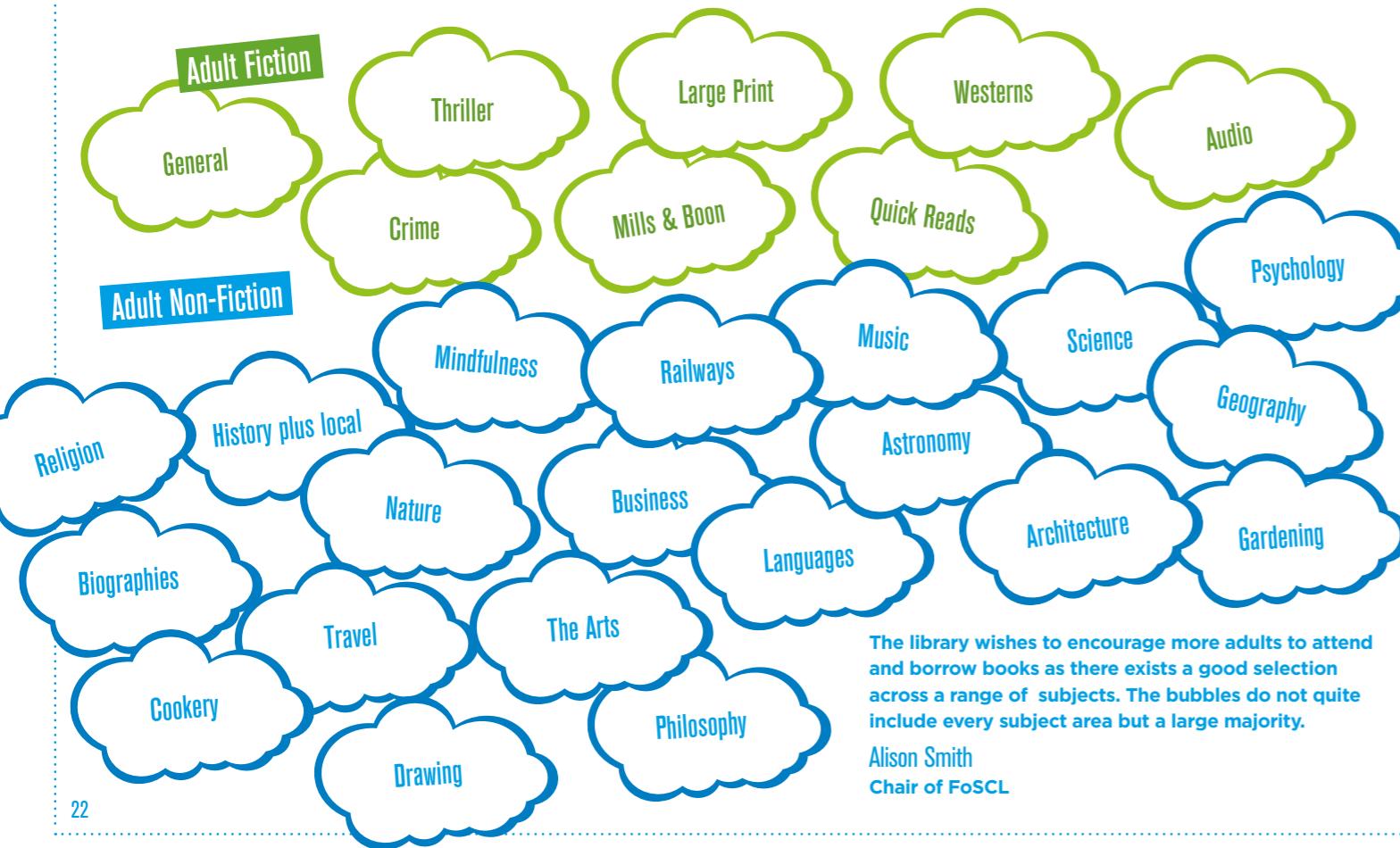


If you are looking for some fiction to escape into, then alongside General Fiction there are sections as diverse as Crime and Thrillers, Mills & Boon, Westerns and many more. If you struggle to read normal print, there is a range of large print books. The librarian can also explain how you can download titles from the huge selection of free audio books - handy for joggers, drivers and those of us who like being read a bedtime story!

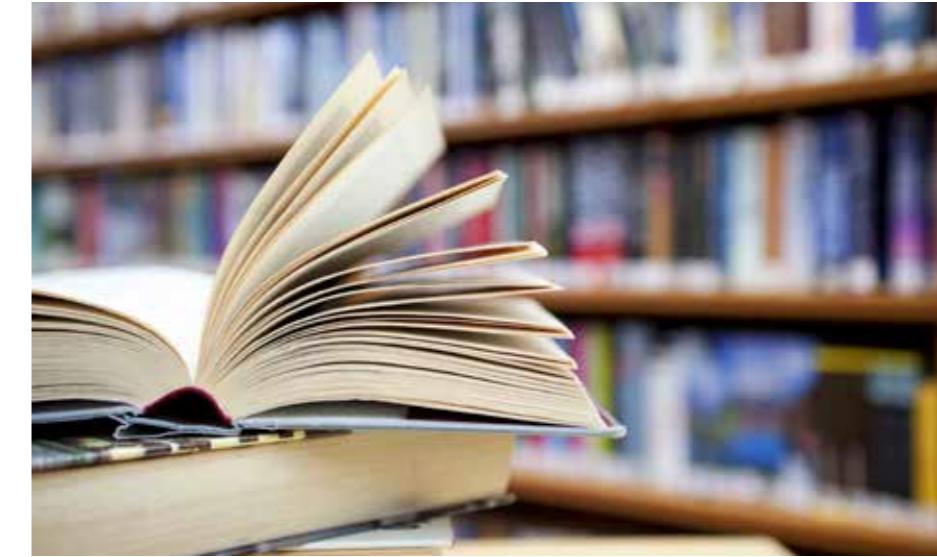
Perhaps you have always struggled with reading, or English isn't your first language. If that is the case, you might be interested in the Quick Reads books. These are short books with great stories written for adults. They are by best-selling authors and are aimed at people just like yourself. One in 6 adults struggles to read so if this is you, or someone you know, you are not alone.

Whoever you are, and whatever you are interested in, chances are someone has written a book about it. You might not know it, but it's out there somewhere! If you want a little help finding it, ask at the library. ●

Alison Smith



# BOOK GROUPS



**It's just over twenty years since I started our book group. Since then we have met once a month to discuss the chosen book.**

The format has worked well all these years. We take it in turns to host the group providing wine, cake the latter usually home made except if it's my turn (can't make a decent cake) and tea or coffee, The host has selected three books of her

choice, gives us a brief resume and we vote and choose one.

I try to be strict but fair. We all get a good turn to talk about the book, try not to interrupt each other and don't talk about the garden, grandchildren or the parlous state of the world until we've chosen the next book and we never talk about religion or politics.

Because of our advancing ages we have changed from an evening session to an afternoon and a couple of hours fly by.

Thanks to Pat Howard we have a record of all the books we have read over the years well over two hundred as well as our own individual reading.

The best sessions are when we don't agree on the book!

It's always fun when some love the book and others loathe it! We do always try and finish the book even if we don't like it but very occasionally a member will say "Sorry Life's too short for that one"

It has made us all so much more adventurous about what we read .

My son in law is very envious and given half a chance would join our group but has to be content with reading our chosen books when we've finished.

Los of men do read so why don't they start a book group? ●

Chrissie Godfrey

# A HIDDEN GEM – THE HOME LIBRARY SERVICE

by Diana Pearman

**Did you know our library volunteers will deliver books to your home?**

The service gives 'access to books' and anyone is eligible if they are unable to visit the library themselves. This service is absolutely essential for some people and can be a welcome lifeline. One of the library volunteers, Claire, has been involved with the home service for some years and she takes books to three readers in their home. She telephones two of them at an arranged time and provides a selection of five or so books she thinks each will enjoy. The third, Ruth, who was a very regular library visitor until her health prevented her from attending, 'thinks this service is wonderful'. She orders the books of her own choice and is amazed how quickly they are ready for delivery by Claire. During lockdown

the service continued with books and sometimes shopping as well, being left on the doorstep.

Sadly, volunteers are still not allowed into Abbeycrest where they used to read poems and short stories to the residents which triggered memories and chat for

the recipients. One lady who worked at Bletchley Park said it was 'the best time of her week'.

There is no cost for this service, nor fines, so just phone and talk to one of the librarians if you would like to be included in the home library service. 0118 972 2448.



# TOM FORT START THE DAY

A while back I happened to hear an item on Radio Four's PM programme about whether or not breakfast was the essential way to start the day. The discussion involved the presenter, the estimable Evan Davis, the food journalist Sheila Dillon, and the newsreader whose name I have forgotten. It became clear quite quickly that none of them actually ate breakfast, which I found infuriating.

I mean, would you invite two experts on 19th century English literature to discuss the budget? Or two economists to talk about the Chelsea Flower Show? So why have three non-breakfasters opining about one of the indispensable components of the happy, well-balanced life.

Or, to put it another way, why didn't they ask me? I have strong views, very strong views, about breakfast. Not so much about what it should consist of - I'm generally a muesli/granola/toast/marmalade/jam/coffee kind of bloke - but the absolute necessity of having something. This is about how you face the new day.

You need to sit down. You need to take some time. You need to organise what you are going to eat and drink and how you are going to do it. Ideally you will sit down. You will look out of the window. You might have the radio on or your newspaper spread out (I disapprove very much of breakfast TV). You need to show some respect for your internal self and recognise that without nourishment you will not perform properly.

I state as a fact  
- married to  
someone  
who,  
despite  
all my  
entreaties,  
does not do  
breakfast -  
that those who  
pay proper attention



to breakfast begin the day in better shape than those who do not. They are more cheerful, more positive, more resilient, better able to meet a challenge. And they are not distracted by hunger; they can focus.

Until about midday or so - when thoughts of lunch begin to intrude. ●

## A YOUNG PERSON'S VIEW OF MEMORIAL PARK

Most of you will know that the New recreation ground in Sonning Common is coming close to completion.

If you walk, drive or cycle past you can see lots of progress has been made.

You can now see the basketball courts, football pitches and car park, the playpark taking shape, and the running and cycling track looping round most of the grounds,

The basketball courts appear finished as does the track. The play park is close to completion with lots of equipment already in place and the mound on which a slide will sit is now clearly visible. Cherry trees line the edge of the grounds and wildflowers line the roadside.

A path from the entrance known as Farm Close, next to Ashford Avenue, has now been cleared which leads to the recreational ground.

I hope that when the ground opens it will be as nice as I know we all currently imagine it will be.

I look forward to playing sports there in the future, running around the track as the sun comes up and relaxing with friends as the sun goes down. ●

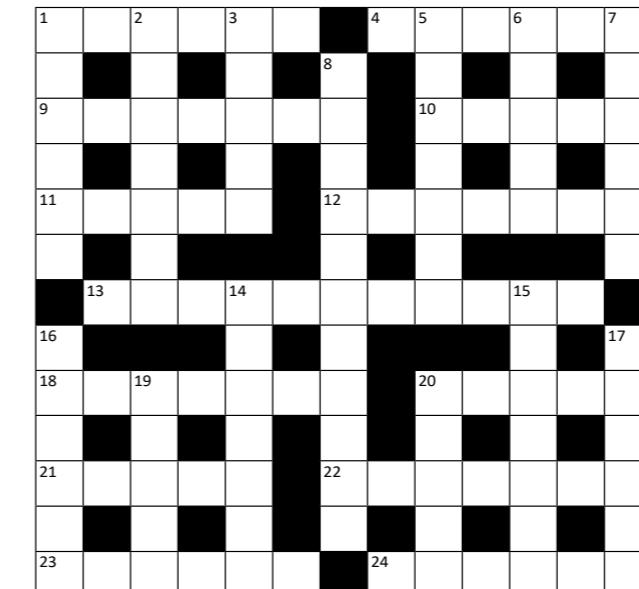
Gabriel Andlauer-Turner



# PUZZLE PAGE

By DAVID DUNSTAN

## Cryptic crossword



## ACROSS

- Swan with net found in the corner of the room (6)
- Girl is Scandinavian around Portugal and Hungary (6)
- Need a long time in local town (7)
- Gasp with oxygen for entertainment (5)
- Weight of a big cat (5)
- Studying in local town (7)
- Drunk obtains kegs in local town (11)
- Loner lazily takes in a week in small local village (7)
- A small animal called Kate? (5)
- Frequently relent when topless (5)
- Stir fry two drumsticks at first in local village (7)
- Woollen cloth returned to south exit (6)
- River runs in figure (6)

## DOWN

- Herdsman is an unscrupulous operator (6)
- Windfall for old grandmother between Belgium and South Africa (7)
- Avoid being in the Geneva debate (5)
- Stop after snake seen on road surface (7)
- Back one language (5)
- No huge deal – there's plenty (6)
- Smother greater fire – it's cool (11)
- Proceeds of gambling with no head for batting (7)
- Korea ends Korea medley for singing (7)
- Recess in Gangster Bay (7)
- Vegetable north country (6)
- Main note in battle (5)
- Pen the French design (5)

See answers on page 34

## Sudoku

5	8				3	4	7
				4	5		8
3							
4	6			7		5	
		5	6	2	8		
	2	5			3	9	
6		1	2				8
2	9	7			5	1	

Grading: easy-medium

## Cryptogram

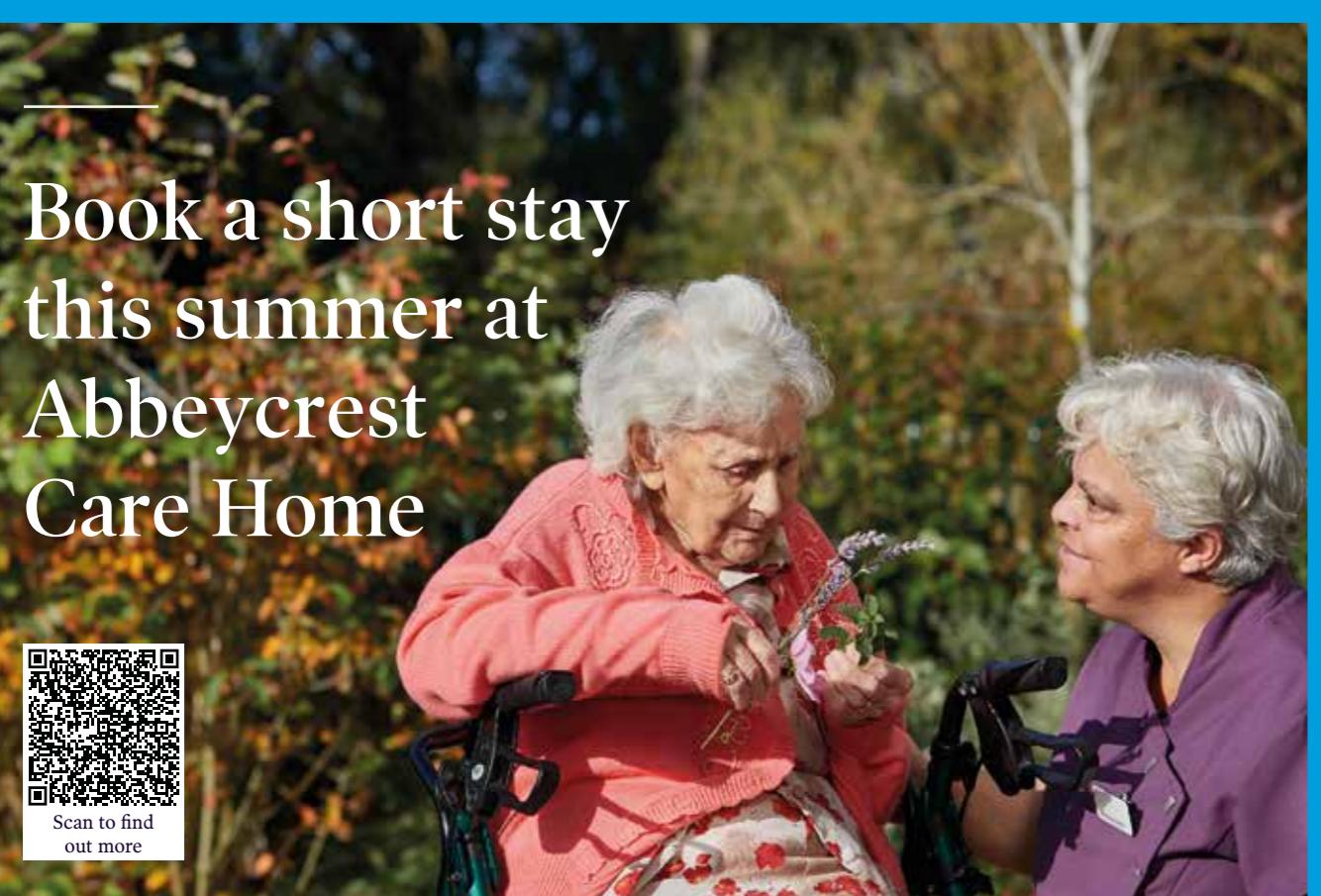
The following quotation has been encoded using a simple letter substitution. What does it say?

UY AUNRO LINYEYM GURW EK U SRAKEYM  
BIN FTA GTIRA HUO. –  
TAYNO HUDEH FTINAUV

## Quiz: Roads

- The Gravelly Hill Interchange in Birmingham (junction 6 of the M6) is better known by what name?
- What is the name of the historic highway from Chicago to Santa Monica, featured in a 1946 pop song?
- Which motorway in Kent takes you to the Channel Tunnel and Dover?
- What was the name of the Minister of Transport who added flashing orange lights to pedestrian crossings?
- What is a motorway called in Italy?
- What was the ancient trade route that connected China and the East with the Middle East and Southern Europe?
- The Appian Way, an ancient and important road, connected Rome with what other city?
- The Trans-Siberian Highway stretches nearly 7,000 miles from St Petersburg to which Russian city?
- Which Roman road ran from Dover to London to St Albans to Wroxeter in Shropshire?
- Four countries in Europe drive on the left. One is the UK. Can you name the others?





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- **Receptionists:** meeting and greeting clients, inputting client data, sorting out the post and paperwork from clients, sending out reminder texts to clients and making and receiving phone calls.
- **IT specialists:** to help to maintain our IT systems

If you would like to make a contribution to your local community, gain new skills and meet new people, please follow this link:

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale/volunteer/>

Or if you would like to discuss these volunteering roles please email: [recruitment@osavcab.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@osavcab.org.uk) and one of our team will be in touch with you. ●

## NEW TRUSTEES NEEDED

We are looking for new Trustees to join our Board. As well as those with broad experience, we would particularly welcome applicants with skills in governance or with a legal background.

We encourage applications from people of any age, background or identity and are committed to equality and diversity.

Trustees are asked to attend six Board meetings a year, held in the evening at various locations. Each Trustee is encouraged to take an interest in a particular aspect of the charity's work.

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- meet people and build relationships with trustees, staff and other volunteers
- build on your governance, leadership and strategy skills
- increase your employability
- and we'll reimburse expenses too.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity, please contact Jane Richardson, the Chair, via [jane.richardson@osavcab.org.uk](mailto:jane.richardson@osavcab.org.uk) or email [recruitment@osavcab.org.uk](mailto:recruitment@osavcab.org.uk) for an application form. ●

## SIX REASONS NOT TO FEED RED KITES

If you live in or near the Chilterns, you'll know that red kites are one of Britain's most magnificent and distinctive birds of prey, with fanned forked tails, a reddish-brown body and a distinctive mewing call. They're a marvel to see circling overhead.

Some people like to feed red kites meat in their gardens to attract large numbers - the birds make dramatic swoops to feed. While this is an impressive spectacle, The Chilterns Conservation Board discourages feeding red kites. Here are some of the reasons why:

1. Feeding encourages red kites to become bolder and too close for comfort. If the birds become a nuisance this could change public support and lead to persecution of red kites.
2. Feeding encourages numbers of kites in one area which discourages songbirds and also nesting birds from feeding and successfully bringing up their young.
3. The scraps of uncooked and cooked meat that people feed red kites don't present a balanced, healthy diet.
4. Red kites can drop scraps of meat which is a health risk and attracts rats and vermin
5. Feeding discourages red kites from expanding their range and looking for new breeding territories and sources of food. This disrupts their natural population spread.
6. Red kites can feed and thrive successfully in their natural habitat without our assistance.

From Victorian times onwards red kites were persecuted almost to the point of extinction due to misconceptions about their behaviour. People saw them feeding on dead lambs and pheasants and mistakenly thought the kites had killed them. The reality is that red kites are predominantly carrion feeders - they feed mostly on dead animals. Although they're big birds they weigh less than a bag of sugar and they are too weak footed to catch anything other than a small rabbit. In modern times they do an important job of helping to clear the countryside of dead animals. The persecution of red kites was such that by the 1980s, red kites had become one of only three globally threatened species in the UK.

So please avoid feeding the red kites - it's far better to enjoy them soaring high above our gardens. ●



# MEET FREDA BUCKNER

By JOAN GRUMMANT



**A Sonning Common Lunch Club member and Organiser of thirty-seven years and counting! Freda Buckner is a well-known figure in Sonning Common and has been a resident since 1968. She is instrumental in ensuring that the Sonning Common Lunch Club continues to meet on the second Wednesday of each month and that residents can enjoy a wonderful meal in the Village Hall and meet up with old friends and make new ones as well.**

Freda was born in Willesden and grew up in London until she moved to Stoke Row when she was ten. Her father was a builder and decorator and bought the shop in Stoke Row. Freda attended Stoke Row Primary School and Rotherfield Greys Secondary School. Freda loved school and loved cooking but left at aged fifteen to work in her father's shop and in B W Francis in Friar Street, Reading. She got married in 1968 to

Brian Buckner and had twin girls in 1971 and a son in 1973. Her passion for cooking and good food and community remained an ongoing interest and eventually led to her involvement with the lunch club. One of her daughters also started volunteering at the club when she was nineteen years old and is still working there today. The warmth and good humour shown by Freda and her team ensures that all members experience a pleasant meal in good company.

In 1985 the Sonning Common Lunch Club was founded to give residents over 60 years old the opportunity to get together, socialise and share a meal. It was started by Christine Bussell and when she left after five years Freda took over to do some cooking and she has been organising this very worthwhile enterprise ever since. The club has only recently restarted after the pandemic and that certainly raised awareness about how important it is for people to have the opportunity to meet and enjoy some excellent home cooked food.

At the moment there are about ten cooks and the menus and tasks are shared out at planning meetings. Freda describes the process as exhausting but also thoroughly enjoyable. Members contribute £5 for the meal and coffee and there is also a raffle for £1 per ticket. It is a good central place to meet people, and new members are made to feel very welcome and should expect a friendly and warm reception.

There are some vacancies at the club at the moment and Freda would be very

pleased to hear from anyone interested. She has a very strong and committed team around her and after thirty-seven years of commitment they all deserve our thanks and appreciation for the hard work and the pleasure they give to so many.

Anyone wishing to go along to the Lunch Club can contact Freda on 0118 972 2924. She will be pleased to hear from you. ●



# PHIL SWIMS 4 MIND - CROSSING THE BRISTOL CHANNEL

By CHRISTINE ATKINSON



**Phil Warren is attempting 4 crossings of the Bristol Channel during this summer raising funds for MIND. This has never been attempted using breaststroke as it is much harder. The Bristol Channel has the second highest tidal range in the world, with 50ft variance in tides complicated by scattered headlands and islands.**

## Swim 1 – 6th June Penarth to Weston Super Mare

Wet suit or no wetsuit – that was the question!

On a quite chilly June morning Phil set out to the harbour at Penarth for a water temperature check. Under 12 degrees would need the extra warmth from a wetsuit. It appeared to be just over so the boat set out from the harbour.



On entering the water, it was clearly much colder – under 11 degrees! The sea was also quite choppy and the going was tough. Phil continued to battle against the elements, including a much bigger flow from the Severn coming down from the rainswept hills. The tide and wind were so strong that he was being blown backwards, making it impossible to get into the land. Unfortunately, this meant that Phil had to be pulled from the water after 7 hours and 11 miles of swimming, just 1 mile from the headland.

Undeterred Phil kept up his training sessions and eating schedule in preparation for the next one....

## Swim 2 – 7th July Penarth to Clevedon

The weather had been improving, and the water getting warmer. Phil swims



breaststroke, which is much harder than a front crawl, and the training proved to be well worth it. The distance is 12 miles in a straight line, but a straight line is difficult with the tides, and Phil had an early start time of around 6am to try and beat them. Still, just over 7 hours of swimming got him to his goal! This was the first ever breaststroke crossing of the Bristol Channel, and only the 12th crossing of this particular stretch since 1926.

"It was brutal" said Phil, "very rough cross winds, but super proud to have done it. Many thanks to the crew and lovely to see my mum and daughter at the finish!"

Bring on No 3 Phil!

Please give a little if you can <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/philswims4mind>

His fundraising is up to nearly £3000 after swim 2.



# Church news



## GOODBYE TO ASSOCIATE PRIEST, REVD SHEILA WALKER

At the end of May, the Benefice of Rotherfield Peppard and Kidmore End & Sonning Common bade farewell to Associate Priest, Sheila Walker, and her husband, Tim.

Sheila came to the Benefice in 2017, initially on a three-year appointment which was later extended, and was licensed at St John the Baptist church in September of that year.

Sheila and Tim soon settled into their home in Peppard, enjoying walks in the local countryside, and quickly making friends. Sheila immersed herself in the work of the Benefice and became very much part of church and community life, visiting schools, care homes and people in need.

As well as the three church congregations, local couples and families have appreciated Sheila's calm supportive presence at baptisms, weddings and funerals, always carried out with careful efficiency and sensitivity.

When the pandemic struck in early 2020, Sheila's true devotion to duty became very evident. Working with the Rector, a pattern of online services was soon established, and the Benefice was able to continue to benefit from Sheila's quiet, reflective style and thought-provoking sermons, Bible studies and home groups.

The Benefice came together at a farewell service and reception on the last Sunday in May: the number who attended was proof of the huge appreciation of Sheila's

friendship, ministry, care and fun.

From everyone in Sonning Common and neighbouring villages, thank you Sheila and Tim for your time here. May you have a restful retirement in Devon, discovering many scenic walks and making many new friends.

**Karen Broadbent**

## CHURCH CONCERT FOR MUSIC SUNDAY



On Sunday 12 June the choir of St John's, Kidmore End, with singers from Christ the King, Sonning Common, came together for the first time in over three years to give a concert in celebration of the Royal School of Church Music's 'Music Sunday'. The concert, titled 'Cool Under Fire', included choir pieces as well as individual items from talented members of the Parish.

The church choir opened the concert with four restful songs, including Handel's He Shall Feed His Flock from Messiah.

Next, Musical Director, Frances Brewitt-Taylor filled in at the last minute for Revd James Stickings, who was unwell, singing his chosen piece, An Die Musik by Schubert.

The audience enjoyed several songs from musicals and operettas, from the Lord Chancellor's Nightmare Song, from Gilbert & Sullivan's Iolanthe, enthusiastically performed by Felicity Cooper, to Reviewing the Situation from Oliver! by Simon Classey, and a gentle rendition of Edelweiss by Penny Edwards, with which the audience was invited to sing along.

Several instrumental solos were included: Elizabeth Chandler playing Romance for Oboe and Piano by Schumann, Linda Scottorn giving a beautiful rendition of

Clair de Lune by Debussy on piano, and Janet Hallett with Linda Scottorn on ukulele with vocals singing and playing Rhythm of the Rain and You Got a Friend.

The choir rounded off the concert with four final pieces, including Cool Under Fire by Valerie MacKenzie and, finally, a sensitive rendition of the Irish Blessing.

Frances Brewitt-Taylor thanked the very appreciative audience and she in turn was thanked for her hard work and inspiration. Linda Scottorn, who accompanied many of the pieces and performers on piano, was also warmly applauded.

The choir, performers and audience then enjoyed refreshments, including homemade cakes and scones.

**Karen Broadbent**

## ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

Over two Sundays in June, a number of our young people made their First Holy Communion. It is a real joy to see younger members of the community progressing in their spiritual life. This is the first year since 2019 the children could be together and extended families be present to celebrate the event. At the time of writing, we are looking forward to our Archbishop, Bernard Longley, visiting us in July. During his visit he will Confirm some of our older children. He was due to visit in 2020 but like so many events had to be postponed.

With the easing of Covid restrictions Fr Michael and Deacon Brian have resumed regular visits to St Martin's, our primary school, in Caversham Park Village. The pupils are once again beginning to play more of a role in some of our Sunday Masses. Access to the local care homes has become a little easier so that the spiritual needs of residents can be met.

The parish started its 75th Anniversary celebrations with a barn dance in the parish hall to the music of 'Hullabaloo'. This was followed by a half day mini pilgrimage to the Chapel of Christ the Redeemer, in the Culham Court estate near Henley. Hopefully some of you will have taken the opportunity to visit St Michael's during our open day on 9 July. If you missed it, you are welcome to call in at any time.

### Concluding a brief history from previous issues:

The current parish hall was completed in 1962 and towards the end of that year all parish activities were transferred there. The temporary building that had been in place since 1947 was removed and the current church constructed in 1963. There was an intention to use laminated wooden beams in the building of the church but it was felt the cost was prohibitive so concrete beams were used instead. A stone recovered from the medieval chapel of Our Lady of Caversham was blessed as the foundation of the church on 30 March 1963 by Archbishop Grimshaw.

Having overseen the development of the parish since its beginning, Fr Ford left Sonning Common in 1968. He was followed by Fr Frank Dawson. During his time the current altar was installed and the interior furnishings and decoration completed. Following Fr Dawson's retirement successive parish priests were: Fr Cecil Keane (1976-68), Fr John Ellis (1989-2005), Fr Chris Bester (2005-10),

Fr Bob Devaney (2010-12), Fr Paul Rowan (2012-15) and now Fr Michael Sharkey.

Each have served the local Catholic community to give us the parish we have today. Over the years our involvement with the other local Christian communities has become increasingly important.

If want to know what is going on check the weekly newsletter on our website: [www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk](http://www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk)

**Brian Theobold**

## NUMBER ONE

Numbers can be significant. And getting them wrong can have consequences.

A lady thought she had won the £34 million jackpot. 10 minutes later she learned that her ticket didn't actually have the winning numbers. 10 minutes of euphoria, and 34 million pounds of false hope, all based on the wrong numbers. Zero was the only number that counted!

ONE is a small number with unexpected significance.

There is ONE God. That means he is everyone's God. There is ONE mediator between God and people. A mediator brings enemies together into a relationship, and Jesus Christ is that mediator. And there is ONE ransom. That is the price paid to set people free, and Jesus gave his life to free us from the rebellion that alienates us from God.

ONE. A number that seems so narrow but is wide and generous.

The lady's remarkably understated response to her number confusion was: "It was a bit of a let-down and I was quite gutted."

How will you respond to the implications of this truth? "There is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all" - Bible

**Bruce Jenkins**  
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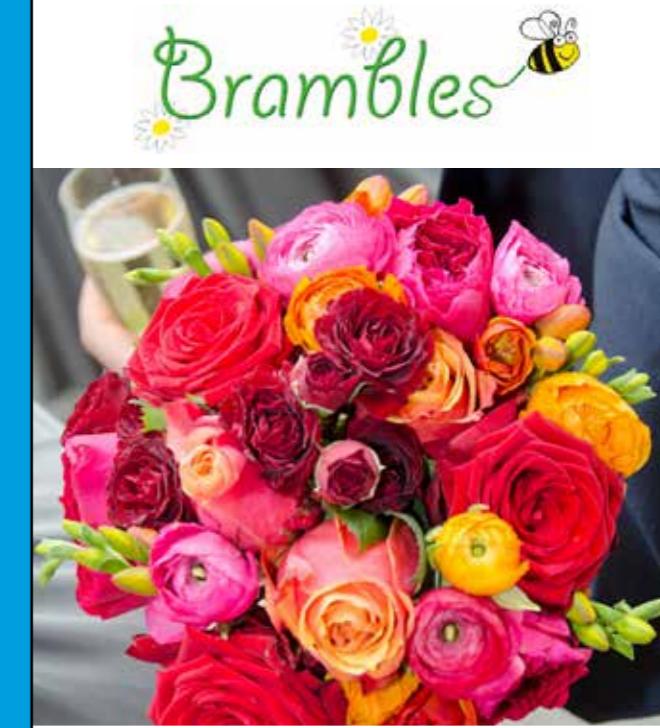
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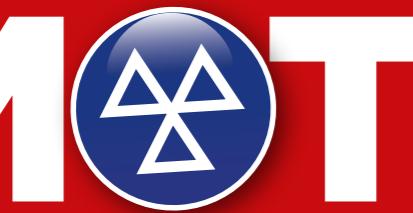
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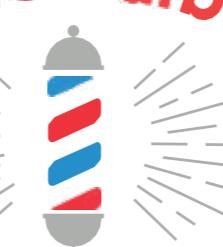
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# FAREWELL ROSEMARY

Murder, mystery and supper are the three words that have featured most recently in the Chiltern Players' performance repertoire. Our last production being *Murder Most Fowl* by Chris Martin in collaboration with the Friends of Sonning Common Library, performed energetically at the Village Hall in February 2020 just before we all went into peculiar isolation. We kept ourselves busy, as you may know, by writing and performing monologues on Zoom and reading plays but there's nothing like the smell of the greasepaint and the roar of the crowd to get the old adrenalin going.

So in March we presented *An Ill Wind* on two subsequent weekends at Peppard Memorial Hall - our spiritual home - and then at the village hall again with FOCSL, that amazing group of people who are determined to ensure the library is alive and well, against all financial odds.

On both evenings, the wine flowed liberally from the bar heightening everyone's enjoyment. Added bonus, we were delighted to be able to donate a substantial amount of what we made to the Ukraine appeal.

These last two productions were particularly significant for me as they were the last scripts I'll be able to cajole the Chiltern Players into performing. We are moving west to be closer to family and for this reason I was so happy my daughter's family and close friends were there to see it

too. I have really enjoyed writing these Murder Suppers over the last few years and who knows? Maybe I can force them on an unwitting drama society in the wilds of Somerset.

The Chiltern Players have given me years, months and hours of enjoyment from the time we first moved to the village in 1985. It was a particularly poignant time for me to join them then as my mum was poorly and had moved in with us in Woodlands Road. The evening spent with the Chiltern Edge Players as they were then provided a welcome couple of hours of hilarity and escapism on a Wednesday with the prospect of a sociable drink at the Hare and Hounds afterwards. After a while I went on to run the Youth Drama Group for many years before my children disappeared to university and we had some great successes both locally in the village and at various drama festivals. My absolute favourites were *Bugsy Malone*, *Our Day Out* (Willy Russell), *Lashings of Ginger Ale* (Stewart Smith), *The Donahue Sisters*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *Return to the Forbidden Planet*. There were so many more but there's nothing worse than lists!!

Some of the lovely original CP members: Jill Greenwood, Jill and Roger Kendal, Diana Gittings and Ann and Peter Dayton are still in the village and it's such fun to look back at past productions, good and bad! We still have a "small but beautifully



marked" number of people who are determined to rally forward into the coming months with quality productions for your edification and amusement.

There are other delights planned: play readings at the Butchers Arms/Red Lion and possibly one act plays to be performed around the village pubs. See, I'm still saying us; how grateful I was to be able to invite these lovely people into our sunny garden last week to eat and get inebriated together before we eventually depart. A big thank you to the Chiltern Players for all the fun.

For the society to continue however, we need more members. We have great directors and stage managers, brilliant technicians, an excellent chairman, treasurer, and committee plus very skilful actors. Come forward and join us, have fun, even if you want to act for the very first time or just help backstage, and be part of this lovely group of people and friends. ●

**Secretary, Cathy Brabben**  
[cathy\\_brabben@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:cathy_brabben@yahoo.co.uk)

**Chairman, Heather Cannan**  
[heatherdcannan@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:heatherdcannan@hotmail.co.uk)

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